Special package for development of tourism

†3304. SHRI JANESWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any special package to promote tourism in economically backward States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government will formulate any special package for integrated development of tourism in the States which are economically backward but having rich culture; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) The Department of Tourism extends central financial assistance to the States/UTs, including economically backward States, for development of tourism infrastructure, based on the projects prioritized in consultation with them. Special thrust has been given in the existing tourism infrastructure development scheme to J&K, North-East and other economically backward States having rich Culture. Moreover, tourism infrastructure development including capacity building has also been undertaken in identified rural sites to provide benefit to community at large and generate employment in rural areas.

Maintenance of inscriptions at Vikramkhol and Alabgarh in Orissa

†3305. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that 5000 years old inscriptions at Vikramkhol and Alabgarh in Jharsugra district in Orissa have been destroyed upto 90 per cent due to lack of proper maintenance;

(b) if so, whether Archaeological Survey of India is taking any steps to save them; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The inscriptions at Vikramkhol are centrally protected and in a good state to of preservation. The inscriptions

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.